

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-3813**

July 2, 2020

Deputy Director David Vela  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Deputy Director Vela,

This week marks the 157th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, a pivotal moment in the Civil War and our nation's history. As the Representative of Pennsylvania's 13th Congressional District, I thank the National Park Service for its longstanding care to protect and preserve Gettysburg National Military Park and Gettysburg National Cemetery – hallowed ground that pays tribute to the Union's enduring fight for justice, equality, and freedom.

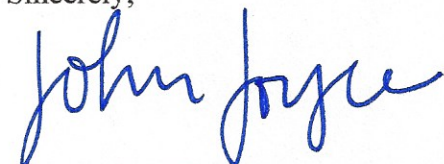
Since the battle's conclusion in 1863, Americans have traveled to Gettysburg to honor soldiers' service and the sacrifices made on these fields. In Gettysburg, Americans learn about the true cost of freedom. It is imperative that we continue to preserve this park not only to respect the Americans who are buried in this sacred ground, but also to ensure that future generations can come to understand what they accomplished there.

This weekend, the Gettysburg community is anticipating possible protests to take place on the battlefield and surrounding areas. While I firmly support Americans' Constitutional rights, I cannot condone violence or the destruction of this historic battlefield and the final resting place of more than 3,500 Union soldiers.

In light of these potential threats to our community, I respectfully request that the U.S. Park Police assist and collaborate with local law enforcement, including the Gettysburg Police Department, to protect the Gettysburg National Military Park and its surrounding area.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, as well as for your continued service to Gettysburg and to our nation.

Sincerely,



JOHN JOYCE, M.D.

Member of Congress